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THE CLAIMS OF THE SPIRIT.

I shall deduce some remarks this morning from the passage in the 3rd chapter of John's Gospel, the 5th and 6th verses:

"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

We are not to understand by this declaration that there is any mysterious efficiency in the application of water. Indeed, this is not a dogmatic statement, in so far as that is concerned. You will recollect that at this time John was baptizing, that Jesus had been baptized, and that the devout Jews were thinking very seriously about baptism into the new kingdom, and Nicodemus, as a very conscientious man, doubtless had it in his mind and in his purpose to be baptized as a fresh start in life, or in righteousness; and Christ says to him, "It is necessary to be more than baptized." He doubtless pointed to something in his thought and feeling. It was necessary that there should be the water and the Holy Ghost. It was the additional element of the Divine spirit that was to be emphatic.

One of the most thoroughly misrepresented of men in the Holy Scripture is Nicodemus. He was a man of great sagacity and purity of life. So far as we have any record, or can deduce any inferences from the facts, he was a superior man, having but one lack. He had not the demonstrative element in him to any considerable degree. He was not a

TWIN MOUNTAIN HOUSE, N. H., SUNDAY MORNING, August 15, 1875. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 187, 605, 840.

bustler; he was not a talker; he was not a man that made the most of everything he did.

It is said that he came to Jesus by night for fear of the Jews, and that therefore he was a timid, cowardly man; but he did not go to Jesus by night for fear of the Jews. That statement is made up by taking two passages, one of which is contained in another part of John's gospel, where it says that many rulers spoke of Christ, but for fear of the Jews did not come to him. That sentence has been taken and put upon Nicodemus; and the theory has always been that he came to Jesus by night for fear of the Jews; but unquestionably he was one of the listeners that heard the discourses of our Saviour to the great crowd, and was not, like the most of them, satisfied with the little that he took in. That which he heard of Christ touched a feeling which resided very deep in his nature. This was a man that he wanted to see. A very great soul carries in itself unexpressed and inexpressible thoughts and yearnings and desires; and to the greatest there is nothing so joyful as to find some one that is greater, who can solve or succor or strengthen or enlighten; and Nicodemus came to Christ by night simply because only then could he sit down for a meal of talk, pour himself out, and ask enlightenment. It was not cowardice: it was hunger—soul-hunger—that brought him by night to Christ. Then only could he find what he longed for.

A strange kind of cowardice his was! for, when the Saviour's career was well advanced, and the templars had determined upon his destruction, he, being a member of the Sanhedrim—that is, of the highest council of the Jews; he, being in honor, having the class-feeling, knowing that they had determined upon the death of Christ; he, when the messengers came back and reported that "never man spake like this man," rebuked his fellows in the Sanhedrim, who scornfully derided, saying, "These people, these coarse, vulgar folks, do not know the law." Nicodemus, standing among his own peers, who were all leagued and bonded against Christ, calmly said to them, "Doth our law condemn any man until he is heard?" Is that cowardice, for a man to stand up among those round about him, in a time of

Christ's peril, and in a time when men had their faces set on his destruction, and calmly bring their own laws home to them, and rebuke them?

And when all was over, when the crucifixion was past; when the terrible drama had been enacted; when the disciples were all scattered, and there was not one of them to take care of the remains of their Master, Joseph of Arimathea got leave to take charge of the body; and then it was that Nicodemus went with Joseph of Arimathea, and took the body of Christ, and embalmed it, and buried it.

Were these the deeds of a coward? I tell you, Nicodemus was one of the calmest and most courageous of the men that appeared in the New Testament; and his name should no longer be a synonym for timidity: it should rather be a synonym for conscientiousness, for quietness, and for courage—a courage that is genuine and real. For anybody can be courageous with a crowd, but very few men can be courageous against a crowd; anybody can be courageous with the stream of public sentiment, but it is hard for a man to be courageous standing alone; and Nicodemus could do that.

Now, there were a great many men in Jerusalem; but it is likely that if you had tried you would scarcely have found another man that was the peer of this man for various excellencies; and it was all the more remarkable that to such a man Jesus declared, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." "Ye must be born again."

Are we to understand that everything which is born of the flesh is naturally corrupt? Are we to understand that until there has passed a crisis in a man's spiritual history, until he has been born again, everything that he ever thought or felt or did goes for nothing? Are we to understand, in other words, that morality is without any spiritual value? Are we to account that part of human thought, will, conduct and character which is directly inspired by the Divine Spirit as the only thing that has value in human life? That has been the extreme teaching of many. It arose, I think, from this cause: there are two kinds of morality—that which may be called the popular notion of morality, and the philo-

sophical notion of morality. The popular idea is that if a man does not do anything very bad, and does some things that are very tolerable, he is moral. Thus, if a man does not steal, if he is not given to violence, if he does not injure anybody knowingly and purposely, if he is reasonably industrious, if he never lies (except upon occasion), if he is a good neighbor, if he pays his debts, if he is a kind father, then he is, as the world goes, understood to be moral. When we speak of a moral man we are generally understood to speak of a man who is free from vices—that is, of a man who has the negative virtue of being free from bad qualities!

Now, what is morality? What do we mean by morality in the larger and more philosophical sense of that term? We mean a reasonable degree of obedience to the laws of ourselves and the circumstances in which we are placed. He who discharges the duties required of him by reason of the physical laws which are inherent in us all; he who discharges with reasonable fidelity the social laws that are imposed upon him by his neighborhood; he who fulfills the obligations that are incumbent upon him by reason of the industrial and commercial relations in society; he who performs the duties that belong to him as a citizen—he discharges moral duties, and he is moral. Morality is obedience to the laws that regulate our conduct in all the varied conditions in which we are placed in society.

Now, the question arises, Is there no value in morality? I say, even in regard to the popular idea of morality, that it is very valuable. It would be one of the worst things that you could do, to give a neighborhood the idea that a man was no better for having negative virtues; and that not to brawl, not to quarrel, not to get drunk, and not to steal, were of no value to a man, to the peace of the neighborhood, or to the possibilities of development in human society. What I say of these things, is, that while they are positive and real excellencies, they are very low. Compared with all that a man is qualified to develop, they are very small indeed in degree, and very low in kind.

But look at the higher conception of morality. Is it nothing that a man is acquainted with the laws of health,

and avoids the transgression of those laws? Is it nothing that he obeys them? In other words, is temperance nothing? Is self-denial nothing? Is forbearance nothing? Is it nothing that a man makes his life move in the channels which God has marked out for him? It is a great deal.

It is said that there is nothing good in these things positively—that they are simply obeying natural laws. Well, did the devil make natural laws? Did not natural laws spring from the nature of God, and are they not his laws? Did he not make the laws which regulate the heart, the brain, and the nervous system? Though on Sinai there was no proclamation of these things, they are just as much from God as the Ten Commandments are; and he who breaks the laws of health breaks God's laws; and if he obeys them, his obedience is a part of righteousness. He who maintains the best health of his understanding, the best health of his heart, and the best health of his body (which is necessary to the health of other things), is obedient so far as the laws which pertain to his person are concerned. In the household a man's sphere extends beyond his own person; and if there he is kind to his elders—his father and mother; to his equals—his brothers and sisters; and to his inferiors—the servants, is that nothing? Is it nothing that he practices self-denial in their behalf? Is it nothing that he fills the house with gentleness and hopefulness and kindness?

If morality is good for nothing, it would be no worse if there were none of it; but who will say that it is not good for something in the family? It may not be good for everything; it may not fill up the measure of duty, as we shall have occasion to show that it does not; but in so far as it goes it is good, and is to be encouraged. Or, if you take the whole neighborhood, would you tell me that it is nothing that a man is moral in the sense that he regulates his own personal affairs justly and generously, and that he is also just and generous and kind toward his neighbors? Do you think that it is nothing that he extends forbearance, gentleness, and kindness to all the households in the neighborhood? You give affront to universal reason, you offend the moral sense of thoughtful and just-minded men, if you say

that it is of no consequence that a man is public-spirited, that he seeks the welfare of those who are not connected to him by ties of blood, and that he attempts to make all who are around about him, wiser, purer, juster, truer, better, and therefore happier.

But then, most men are affiliated in business relations; in industries of one kind or another, creative or distributive; and this form of life has its own scheme of morals or ethics, according to which some things are right, and some things are wrong, on account of the customs, agreements, and general understandings of men. Experience has shown that this scheme of morals or ethics is indispensable in society; and is it nothing that a man is true to his word, and that his word is as good as his bond? Is it nothing that a man is considerate and forbearing? If it is not a virtue to be forbearing, then it is not a vice to be greedy. If truth-speaking among one's neighbors is of no account, then lying is no fault. If to treat men as you would have them treat you, according to the Golden Rule, in your business relations, is of no moral worth, is not orthodox, then the opposite—"Let every man look on his own things, and take care of No. 1"—is not heretical or vicious.

The fulfillment of our duties in commercial and industrial relations is a morality that has its own value in business between man and man.

When men, therefore, ask me, "Do you preach morality?" I say, "Certainly I do—most certainly I do." "Do not you believe in spirituality?" "Most certainly I do—most certainly." I will illustrate it.

I have a vineyard on my hillside. When my vines were set out I was young and callow in the business of vine-raising; and I was in doubt whether they were going to live; but when, after some weeks of southern wind and rain, I found that the buds had swollen, and were breaking out into leaf, I was rejoiced indeed. I was glad to see every bud. I said, "How fare you?" to every leaf. And when they began to throw out at every axil a stem with more leaves, I was still more rejoiced.

"Well," says a man, "what were your leaves good for?

Could you eat them?" No. "Could you get any grapes from them?" No. "Was there any wine in them?" No, none. Nevertheless, the leaves were good. So was the stem good. It was good because it had started on the way toward blossoms and grapes. It was on the road toward their juice. If it were allowed to fulfill itself it would come to grapes.

Now, morality is the leaf, and spirituality is the blossom and the cluster; and you cannot get the blossom and the cluster out of the air, without anything on which to hang them. They must grow out of something lower and less than themselves. Thus, spirituality grows out of morality. It is carried up and carried on; and the reason why morality is not enough, is simply this: it has not had its development. It is good to begin with and to go on with; but it should perfect itself. As every root seeks to run through the whole circle of its appointed being; as every summer, beginning small, enlarges, and warms, and grows more beautiful and glorious, and winds up in the graciousness of autumnal harvests; so the human soul is germinated. At first there are the stem-forms; and these lower forms go on higher; and they reach more and more nearly to the blossom till they attain it; and finally they come to the fruit.

No vine, no matter how many leaves it has, could bring forth any fruit by these leaves alone; and yet no vine that brings forth fruit could afford to turn round to its leaves and say, "You are of no account." They are not good to eat, but they are good to bring forth things that are good to eat.

Moralities are the lower forms of man's virtues. They are germinant and coarser forms of obedience; and as such they are indispensable. They are like leaves on trees which bear no fruit. They are like vines that germinate, and bear nothing. An unfruitful vine is all through the Bible set up as an emblem of a man who has just the lower earth-forms of virtues, but who never lets them grow and develop into their higher forms.

I am a preacher of morality, therefore, because I am a preacher of spirituality. I am a preacher of morality because, though I believe in the Divine Spirit, and though I believe in the indispensableness of it to all true productive

human life, I also believe that the Spirit does not create, but *develops*. If the natural faculties are in you, and if the earlier forms of morality are in you, then the Spirit of God, quickening you, and leading you on step after step in your education, brings out the final form—the fruit.

Now, let us turn to some of the fruits of the Spirit. We shall find them enumerated in the 5th chapter of Paul's letter to the Galatians. I will read them first, and then go back and comment on some of them. There are fruits of the Spirit just as there are fruits of the sun. Among the fruits of the sun are peaches and pears and apples and dahlias and camellias and azaleas and tulips and hyacinths. The divine influence, according to the declaration of Paul, produced in men fruits of the Spirit, as the light and warmth of the sun produce these other fruits.

Now, what is the fruit that is produced by the Spirit?

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

I cannot help thinking, when I read such passages as these, of catechetical examinations which I have heard made, by Committees, of persons for church membership. The evidence that a person is prepared to join the people of God is supposed to be that he believes in the "fall of Adam"; in "original sin"; in "election and reprobation"; and that he understands about "ability" and "inability," and about "the perseverance of the saints," and other such intricate and subtle questions of theology. The Spirit of God is nothing, apparently, in the minds of these committees. One would think, from the questions which they ask, that the Holy Ghost was the editor of catechisms. But in the word of God the fruit of the Spirit is what? What are the foundations or points on which your emotion, your temperament, your mind-state, your character, should rest? What is the question on the subject of love? How stands a man in the matter of joy? These are interrogatories which are ruled out, often, by Examining Committees. Why, it is thought that no one is fit to go into the church as long as he is joyful. It is thought that a man, in order to be qualified to join the

church, should be long-faced, and should be awfully conscientious. It is thought that smiles are only occasional vacation-experiences. Therefore men look with suspicion upon gayety and beauty and grace and buoyancy and developments of taste and the other finer feelings. "These will do for a natural man," they say, "but you must remember you are a Christian." My declaration is, Because you are a Christian you must be happy and joyful, and you must be the most buoyant of all people.

The first fruit of the Spirit which is mentioned is love, and the next is joy. Now, joy is one of the very signs that you have been born again. A man without joy may have been born again, but he was dwarfed in infancy. There are spiritual dwarfs; but Paul is calling out for *men*—men in Christ Jesus.

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace."

Yes, *peace*. That is a spiritual trait which you may look for up and down through the churches of the land, and you can hardly find it unless you catch persons asleep. Our nervous, Yankee education; this intolerable haste in development; this rushing to and fro; this perpetual excitement in which men live—this is in marked contrast with that fruit of the Spirit which is denominated "peace." Ah! the sweetness of peace! The calm restfulness of it! That strange and glorious joy which steals upon a true soul, walking alone in communion through the vast expanse with the Invisible; that soul-rest which comes no one knows whence, and which abides strangely in the midst of distemperatures and troubles; that language which is taught to a man by no teacher of languages; that treasure which money cannot measure, and the value of which cannot be represented by gold or silver or precious stones—that you may have when men are out upon you, and when the storms are black in the heavens.

The fisherman's hut is near the waves; the thunder rolls; the sea breaks; the heavens scowl; the clouds whirl before the wind; it is evening, and the light shines out through the little lattice window; and within there is sweet calm; and there are none more happy than those who live there, in the midst of the storm; for they are safe and secure. And so

may those have peace who are secure and safe in the hands of the Lord, though the storm rages about them.

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace."

Not alone the peace of quietude; not alone the peace of non-doing; but peace in activity, peace in enterprise, peace in sickness, peace in peril—strange power of inwardness, that holds every fear in abatement, and gives to courage calmness and strength."

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering."

Who does not need long-suffering that lives in this world where weeds grow and crops do not; where vexations and attritions spring up; where the closer your relationships are the more you see the faults of men; where selfishness is constantly over-riding benevolence; where envy and jealousy poison the very fountains of joy; where there is so much of the lower, the animal, nature of man?

If a man is going to maintain himself in this world he must have wind and bottom. There are a great many horses that can run their quarter of a mile, but then are "blown"; and there are some horses that can run four miles, and can repeat it if it is necessary. What is needed is long-suffering stamina—which does not permit a man to turn back from anything which he means to do and to be; which does not discredit men; which does not take away faith in humanity and goodness, though it is continually vexed and crossed.

There are some men who have been all over the world, seen every city, and enjoyed all sorts of pleasure, mingling with men of every description, and who have come back so wise that they say to you, "Oh, it is very well, you know, in a village, to bring up children right and according to rule; it is very well to govern them according to strict principles of morality; it is very well to teach them religious ideas; but, after all, when they get out from under your influence they will be swept along by fate." There are men who are kind and obliging to their fellow-men because it is polite and politic; but they are without faith in right, without faith in duty, without faith in the disinterestedness of love, without faith in divine and enduring benevolence.

Now, no man is a true man who goes out into the world

without believing in substantial spiritual qualities, and without having a feeling of long-suffering in these things. No man is half a man who has lost faith in men; and in order to have faith in men you must begin pretty low. Do this, and your faith will never waver in respect to them, even if they are very weak and wicked. I believe in the depravity of men; and that belief is indispensable to Christian charity. Start with that, and you never will be disappointed except agreeably; for you will find men better than you expected them to be; and your good opinion of them will always be on the gain.

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness."

Do not, I beg of you, think that gentleness is an attribute of weakness.

A pair of bellows takes on all the airs of a thunder-storm. Looking out of the window, it says, "Hem! that turbulent storm—see what trees it has overturned. See how it has unroofed that man's barn. See how it has swept down that chimney over yonder. I do not tear up things. I am gentle." Well, a pair of bellows has to be gentle. It has not the power to be anything else.

Many people think they are gentle because they are sick! A person without much stomach to make blood with; without much heart, or pump with which to throw up the blood, and without much brain when it is thrown up, lives in a kind of dreamy, moonlight existence. He is always gentle, because he is feeble. But gentleness is not feebleness.

When the great muscular hand of the farmer takes up a babe out of the cradle, how gently he does it! He has power in that hand, if he were to shut it, to put an end to one existence very quick; but he does not do it; and the babe looks up and smiles. See how he carries it in his shaggy bosom. A babe in a large man's bosom looks like a nest in a great tree. Gentleness is compatible with strength. Where power is self-contained, there you find gentleness. Strength so soft and so sweet that everybody loves its touch—that is gentleness; and such gentleness is a virtue. God, the omnipotent Thunderer claims it; for he says, in describing himself:

"He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets."

He is not clamorous like a mob that has broken into a town.

"A bruised reed shall he not break."

The reed that grows tallest, and is feeblest, he will not overturn, like the wild animal that dashes through the thicket.

"Smoking flax shall he not quench."

God's spirit moves among men more gently than a breath of wind. It moves so gently that when the flame is dancing upon the wick or lamp, doubtful whether it will go out or continue to burn, he will not extinguish it. That is the way the gentleness of power in God is described.

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness."

I can only appeal to you, on the subject of goodness. The definitions of it cannot be given. Some men and some women you know are good. They are not persons of genius. They cannot hold an argument. They cannot write poetry—thank God. They cannot do things that indicate largeness of intellect in any way. But there are persons in every neighborhood, I trust, to whom everybody looks up, and in whom everybody feels strong. If you are in any trouble, they are the ones to go to.

Goodness, whether it be of the eye, of the tongue, or of the hand, is a universal disposition to make everybody happier and better that comes near it—not to make them better first, and then happier. Sometimes it should be that way; but just as often it should be the other—that is, they should be made happy so as that they may be made better. If there is anything in this world that is intolerable, it is to have a thoroughly strong good person talk to you about making you happy by making you good. If anything is intolerable, it is to have such a person say to you, "If you will be good you will be happy." Many a man might reply to that, "Well, I cannot be good because I am not happy." As a general truth, you shall be happy in the proportion in

which you are harmonized—not in the proportion in which you are good. It is harmony of all the faculties that makes happiness, ordinarily—not so much the quality of single faculties. There are those who make men happy all the time in the direction of making them better.

I remember that, in my own childhood, the person whom I looked up to most was not the person that kept me from playing on Sunday, nor the person that made me recite my lessons most rigorously, but the person that knew my troubles, and shielded me from necessary moral discipline, and gave me cake for bread, and helped me to a thousand little things which I wanted. For children have feelings. You may think that they are made only to be cuffed and to run errands; but they have feelings; and a good aunt, or a good elder sister, or a mother that is cheerful and prayerful and devout, and that knows how to throw a wing around a child, and to make the child happy, becomes in the child's imagination the very ideal of piety, and so has a power over him which no other person has.

Are there not some of you who think of your father and mother as sitting, as it were, in a perfect halo of brightness? You could not, perhaps, point out a single trait in their character that particularly impressed you; but you remember where they sat in the old arm-chair, how they were as heaven to you, and how you always liked to stay by their side, and disliked to go away from that place.

I tell you, goodness is a great thing in this world, being disposed, as it is, to make better, wiser, and happier, everybody that comes near it; but it is greatly neglected.

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control," [for the word *temperance* in the New Testament should be translated *self-control*, or *self-government*.]

Now, such are the fruits of the Spirit. Moralities are the sprouts; and these are the fruits of moralities. If you trace them one by one, you will see that every one of those qualities which are distinctively pronounced to be the working of God in us "both to will and to do of his good pleasure," is the outcome of the natural faculties. Every one of

them is simply some natural morality carried up under the inspiration of God, under the stimulus of the divine mind, to that state in which it blossoms and brings forth fruit. When a man, out of these lower forms, is so developed that they begin to blossom, he then has become a child of God—he is born again.

Let me put a case to you. A man is kind in his own household. He is benevolent. There are such men. They are perfectly generous to wife and son and daughter. But when they go out into life they regard that as a game. They consider that they are bound to take care of themselves; and woe be to the man who endeavors to outwit them in a bargain. Now, one of these men, who is considerate toward his wife and children in the household, who is kind and obliging in his social relations, but who is hard and crusty in business, and who takes every advantage he can in bargain-making, goes forth on some comely May morning, and says, "Men and brethren, I have been converted." Some one says to him, "Then you believe in the inspiration of Scripture." "Oh, sir," says the man, "that is a question which I have never thought of. I do not know how I stand about that." "Well, as to the Trinity—you believe in that?" "Well, I hope I do, though I do not know how I stand on that, either. I have not thought about that." "Well, you believe in an orthodox scheme of salvation?" "Very probably I shall come to that; but I do not know how I stand respecting it." "Why, then, do you think you are converted?" "Because the Lord appeared to me last night. He was with me. He shined on me, and I could not carry on my plans, because I saw that I should be wringing blood out of this man and that man. I cannot any longer consent to do harm to any one. Here are four or five persons that have been beseeching me to do them kindnesses; and I always have shut the door against them; and now I feel as though I wanted to benefit them; and I am going to do it, instead of continuing my business in the old way. I am going to help everybody. My heart goes out after the weak and ignorant. I am sorry for all that have stumbled. Somehow or other, all men seem to be my brethren now;

and I am carrying them on my heart. I do not know why it is unless I am converted."

If some men that you know should take such a start, you would think they were converted, would you not? Here is a man who all his life has harassed and vexed everybody that came within his reach; and now he is endeavoring to live righteously. He has been trying to do it a week, a month, six months, or a year, and the testimony of men on every side is, "This man treats his fellow men, all of them, as if they were his brethren. He acts as if he loved them. He does not neglect himself or his family; but he is living for other people." Looking upon the poor and wretched creatures around about him he says, "I do not know them; but more and more it is borne in on me, as the saying is, that God made everybody, and that all men are his children. That view of God, together with the thought of what he has done for me, makes my heart go out toward him. I love him, and want to do something for him, and I do not know how, except by helping his children. So I am living to serve God by living for my fellow men."

Would you not say that that man was born again? Would you not say that something had come over his old faculties, and changed them, and made them glorious?

If you were to come here in March, and look over these knolls, you would find that they were brown, and apparently without life. You might take a crowbar, and go and try them, and you would find that they were hard as flint. The ground has vitality in it, but it is all frozen up. Now, go and look at these knolls, and you will find grass and moss everywhere nestling under them; and you will discover a thousand exiguous flowers waiting to be found. Everything is growing and everything is teeming with heat. What has wrought the change? The sun. But the knolls were there before the sun shone upon them. The roots were there before the grass and moss and flowers could grow. Otherwise the sun could not have brought them out. And they could not have come forth themselves.

So the germ-forms of morality are in the souls of men; and the warmth from the bosom of God rests down upon

them, and they begin to grow, and they grow a little more and a little more to the end of life; for "the path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." We do not begin perfectly in anything; and not until ages have rolled over our heads in the other life shall we be perfect.

Let me, then (for I will not weary you with a long discourse—and these are not regular sermons, but rather talks), say to every young person, Do not discredit morality. Do not believe anybody that tells you that moralities are of no account. They are of very great value. They are the foundations on which you are to build. Even if a man should not carry morality up to spirituality, he is a great deal better with it than without it. On the other hand, do not deceive yourself by supposing that you are as good as you ought to be, simply because you are moral. Morality is the foundation of the house; but what is a house good for with a foundation, but with no walls, and no roof? What is a house good for with walls and a roof, but with no finishing inside? And what is a house good for that is finished inside, but that has no furniture, no carpets, and no upholstery? What is a house good for that is furnished from top to bottom, but that has neither man, woman, nor child in it, to give social life to it? In the human soul you need foundation qualities; and they need to be carried up; and when they are carried up they need to develop spiritual elements—the fruit of the spirit. There must be this heavenly unfolding in you, if you are to be truly a child of God.

Morality will not save you. Righteousness will not save you either, for that matter. God saves, not because the man that is saved is good, but because he himself is good. The noblest saints that ever went singing into the heavenly state went in by the grace of God. No man can be saved except by God's grace; but the grace of God comes to you, not as the rain descends, but as growth comes. Its office is to open you; to make you larger; to make you wiser; to make you purer; to make you sweeter. God saves men as fast as they are salvable. And I do not think that after we die and go to heaven we are all alike. I mean that some men

enter heaven so as by fire. Do you suppose a man that is only moderately developed in his spiritual faculties is in heaven as much as they who are a thousand times more developed? There are some men whom I suppose remain on the edge of heaven before they are fit to be advanced and to go into the royal throng of the redeemed and blessed in the heavenly land.

Be moral, if you will not be anything else; but be moral on your way up to spiritual things. Fulfill all the duties that are obligatory upon you in your individual relations, in your family relations, in your neighborhood relations, in your industrial relations, and in your civic relations, but remember that there is a duty which is more imperative than any of these things. Your God, your Saviour, the quickening Spirit, has claims upon you; and shall you serve your earthly father and mother, and not your greater Father? Will you love men, with all their imperfections, and not love the perfect One? Will you do good and be good, and not requite Him who gave you the power to be good and to do good?

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Our Heavenly Father, we thank thee that we look no more to the hills nor to the heavens, but that we look to Jesus Christ, as the full interpretation of God brought home to us in our own form, walking upon the earth as we walk, oppressed as we are, and sought out by hunger, and thirst, and weariness in over-labor. We rejoice that we behold him and his disposition reflecting the nature of God himself, rejoicing in sacrifice, and loving with an unquenchable passion which death itself could not destroy; and we rise from him to thee, coming in no other way, and understanding thee aright in no other way. Thou God and Father of us all, we rejoice in thee through the light of the knowledge which comes in Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

We bless thee that we are brought together again upon this day, so many of us, some renewing the memories of years gone by, many strangers to each other, but all brought into the presence of a common Father. May the spirit of brotherhood be diffused among us. May we receive the blessing of Almighty God, even at the beginning of our service. May there rise among us that fellowship, that divine sympathy, that yearning of our souls for thee, that heavenly-mindedness from which shall come joy and peace this day; and may we feel that we are not strangers among strangers, but brethren at home in the Lord. Though we differ in outward things, and though we are from diverse organizations, may we be one and very near together, hand in hand and heart with heart this day to love thee, to worship thee, to implore mercy and forgiveness, and to receive strength and consolation.

And wilt thou be gracious unto us, our Father, not according to the wisdom and the purity of our asking, but according to the greatness of our necessity, and according to the greatness of thy generosity. Take no measure from our way of thinking; take no measure from our habit of giving; take thy measure from thine own self. Thou that art infinitely full of riches; thou that dost delight to give rather than to receive; thou that dost live to overflow thy light, and give a portion of it to all things that are, look upon us this morning, and relieve our minds, though our trouble may seem to us, or to any of us, very great; though our sorrow may seem very deep; though our disappointments may seem very grievous; though our limitations may seem very narrow; though we may be pinched or pierced; though we may seem pursued or oppressed; though we may be at liberty, or in the wilderness, or shut up in our necessity. How great is trouble to us because we are so little! and how little is it to thee who art so great! For what thing is there that it troubles thee to fill and cover with light this day? The stateliest trees and all of them that do thickly populate the mountains, it is as easy for thee to pour sunlight upon as upon the smallest flower that grows, and troubles that seem to us like trees are nothing to thee when thy mercy looks upon them. It is easy for thee to forgive; it is easy for thee to love; it is easy for thee to deliver; it is easy for thee to lift

up those that are cast down; it is easy for thee to comfort the afflicted; and it is easy for thee to speak peaceable words to those who are distressed.

Now, out of the infinite ease of thy power and graciousness, O Lord our God, draw near to every one in thy presence, and make him rich. Thou wilt not miss what thou givest. Thou wilt not by reason of all that is poured forth from thee to fill universal being this day be the less thyself; for giving doth not impoverish thee, nor doth withholding make thee rich. Grant, therefore, that there may be given to us such a sense of thine infinite fullness, and graciousness, and loving-kindness, and tender mercy, that we may strangely forget our own sorrow, and find ourselves stronger in our God and made cheerful by the cheer that is in him, looking away from self. No longer whirling in the small sphere where our troubles are, may we know ourselves to be sons of light, and the sons of God, and heirs of the heavenly inheritance; and may we rise up with the dignity and joy and conscious power which belong to us, not of ourselves, but of God.

We pray that thou wilt comfort those who are drawn near this day by reason of the weariness of years, or by reason of the trials and troubles which gird them as with sackcloth; and speak peaceably to them.

Give light, we pray thee, to any who are longing for light; whose minds are darkened as to the truth; who know not the way of duty; who are perplexed with many contrary contrivances of their reason. We pray that thou wilt give deliverance from perplexity and trouble to every mind. O Lord God of our fathers, they are with thee. They were delivered, and we hope. They triumphed in death, and we shall triumph. It is but a little way from here to the day of our departure. Why should we go mourning? Why should our faces be as the night? The morning comes. The day-star dawns beyond the hills. Fill us with joyfulness that so much is accomplished, and so little remains to be accomplished. With the certainty of immortality and glory before us, what have we to do with tears and fears and complaints? Rise up in our hearts, Spirit of Immortal Life. Crown us to-day with joy. May we see Jesus Christ in each other. Since we are redeemed by him, may we behold each other as partaking, not alone of infirmity and weakness and sinfulness, but as heirs of perfectness; and may we love more and more to look at things that are excellent and beautiful in each other; and may the light of the other life inspire us to dignify and glorify our fellowship one with another, that we may live in the spirit of our Master, in the communion of saints, and with ourselves not disjoined from that great overhanging host whose sweet music fills the heavens and the universe.

And now we pray that thou wilt grant that our tarrying together for the day or for the weeks here in this far-off retreat, where the thunder of the city is dying away, and where we are in sweet and blessed solitude, may be profitable to us. We pray that thou wilt abide in us to check all jealousy, to rebuke all envy, to destroy all selfishness, and to give liberty and full disclosure to the sweetness

and blessedness of sympathy through forbearance and gentleness and kindness one toward another. So may we live as they that sing perpetually. And, at last, when we are called to depart, may we not be unwilling to leave the world. Yet may we not be glad to leave it as though it were a prison-house; for to many it is a palace. May we not cast contempt upon the world as though it were a vile thing. May we die, not as those that would be unclothed, but as those that would be clothed upon, that we may rise to something better even than the best things that are here. May we appear in Zion and before God, bearing the image of our God in every line and lineament. There, in his Spirit and in his presence, may we be glad forevermore.

And the praise of our salvation we will give to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

BLESS, we pray thee, our Father, this waiting throng. Breathe into every one of them divine intelligence. Make it easier for them to be virtuous, and true, and gentle, and loving, and lovable. Give to them that power which they have not in themselves, and which thou givest liberally, upbraiding none. Grant to every one strength. Grant to every one an honest conscience and a truth-loving mind. Grant to every one ambition in things that shall make him better. And may we seek, not our own things, but also the things of others. In all things may we approve ourselves the sons of God. And at last, through our many weary ways straying hither and thither, bring us at last to the one blessed home from which there shall be no going out any more, nor any death, nor any sorrow, nor any crying.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit shall be praise evermore. *Amen.*

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